



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

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Emergency Rule: Bottom Longline Gear Restriction in the Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Fishery

NOAA Fisheries Service implemented an emergency rule, effective May 18, 2009, through October 28, 2009, to reduce the sea turtle bycatch in the Gulf of Mexico bottom longline reef fish fishery. The emergency rule prohibits bottom longlining for Gulf reef fish east of 85°30'W longitude (near Cape San Blas, Florida) in the portion of the Exclusive Economic Zone shoreward of the provided waypoints (**see table**). The boundary generally follows the 50-fathom depth contour (**see map**). Once the deepwater grouper and tilefish quotas have been filled, the use of bottom longline gear to harvest reef fish in water of all depths east of 85°30'W longitude will be prohibited. During transit no reef fish may be possessed unless bottom longline gear is appropriately stowed meaning that a longline may be left on the drum if all gangions and hooks are disconnected and stowed below deck; hooks cannot be baited, and all buoys must be disconnected from the gear, but may remain on deck.

As a reminder, in the case of the 50-fathom regulation line intersecting a marine reserve, fisherman must also adhere to the regulations for the reserve.

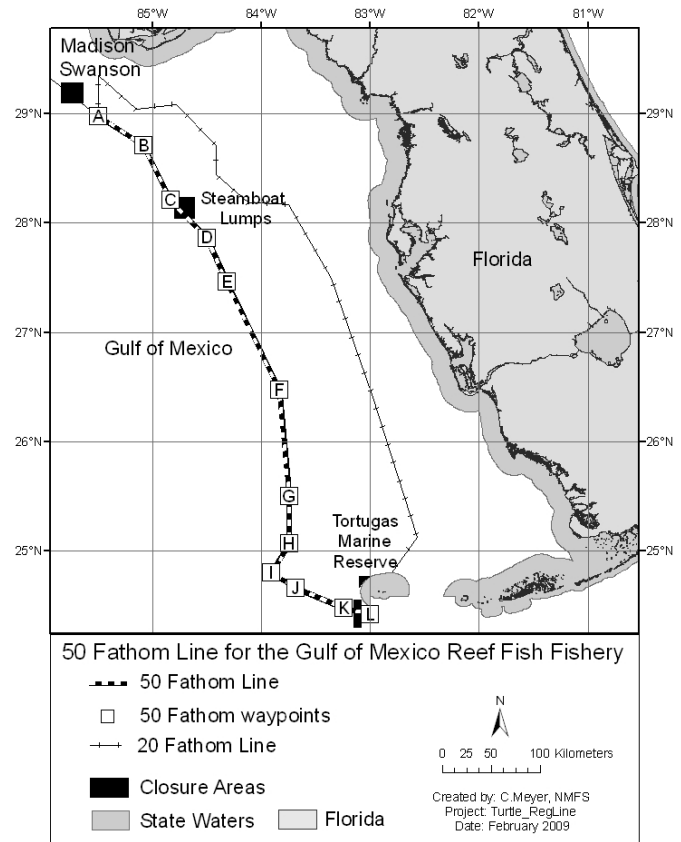
The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) requested this action at the January 2009 meeting. The emergency rule is intended to reduce sea turtle takes in the short-term while the Council develops long-term protective measures through Amendment 31 to the Fishery Management Plan for Reef Fish Resources in the Gulf of Mexico.

This bulletin provides only a summary of the information regarding the existing regulations. Any discrepancies between this bulletin and the regulations as published in the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.

Need more information on these topics?

Southeast Regional Office's Web page:

<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>



Waypoint	Longitude West	Latitude North
	Degree Decimal Minute	Degree Decimal Minute
A	85°30.0'	28°58.5'
B	85°05.0'	28°42.5'
C	84°50.0'	28°12.5'
D	84°30.0'	27°52.0'
E	84°19.0'	27°28.0'
F	83°50.0'	26°28.5'
G	83°44.5'	25°30.0'
H	83°44.5'	25°04.0'
I	83°54.4'	24°48.0'
J	83°41.0'	24°39.5'
K	83°14.5'	24°28.5'
L	83°00.0'	24°25.0'

How Can We Improve These Fishery Bulletins?

If you have any suggestions on how we may improve the contents of future fishery bulletins, please contact:

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